

OFFICE OF:
J. GRAY LUCAS,
ATTORNEY AT LAW AND SOLICITOR
IN CHANCERY.
ALSO UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT
OF ARKANSAS.

117½ MAIN STREET.

Pine Bluff, Ark., 189.....

Dear Sir -

Manville, New York.

Dear Sir and Friends: You do not, probably, remember the name of the undersigned that you were kind enough to write, at his request, your opinion ^{concerning} a certain sketch delivered in the last legislative session the "Deer Creek Bill" of which he was author.

Since that time, when we drafted a few suggestive hints as to its fitness, we have felt that there was not only a brilliant wish, but something of a friend to me.

I have many a time and oft thought to write you now, dear Sir, to associate your endeavor to not only awaken public sympathy and conscience towards the oppressed, but also to awaken the intelligence and manhood of the oppressed, that they might not through the many years of suffering largely to oppress and agitate and that the name of action."

Your many years of toil in the endeavor

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To right the wrong to some extent that
has been and continued to be done to Amer-
ican citizenship has given you a place
among the boldest champions of the
cause of the colored people of this country.

With no evasion, no equivocation nor
compromise you have waged a ceaseless
war, and the noise of the conflict be-
tween right and wrong has been heard afar,
from the rising to the setting of the
sun; from the dominion to the Gulf and
you have been heard above all the de-
mands, justice equal to equity.
And I now heartily thank you for myself
and my people whose hearts beat warmly
for Brantley and whose manly stand-
ing - and whose gratitude may ^{not} be expressed
unless by their acceptance of his manly
words of cheer and advice.

The leadership of such a man, and your
efforts are now crystallized, centralized and
marshaling, has been placed in the hands

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hands, which could not have happened
less providentially than the transmigration
which the soul of Mr. Hughes underwent,
that he might the better understand the
suffering and dare the espousal of the
cause in which you are ^{now} engaged.

Only truth which is stranger than fiction,
came to you and your conscience with-
out any such dreadful experience as that
of Mr. Hughes. In this, you exemplify
that "truth is stranger than fiction."

This movement will succeed ultimately,
as I believe, in emancipating the whole
people from a worse thralldom than
ever cursed this land at any period of
its existence.

Be you assured that the colored people
in particular are grateful to you and
interested exceedingly in the movement
to organize a "Citizens' Equal Rights Association."
I give you my name that I may be also
enrolled with the many towards this much

desired consummation in defense
of American citizenship. Let my name
appear.

Yours for the cause,
J. Gray Kears.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013